

over the last year. He met his developmental milestones. He was talkative. He enjoyed being with people. He interacted socially.

Then Christian received his routine immunizations as recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. His life changed dramatically and rapidly. He received five different shots and one oral vaccine all in the same day. We now know that many of these shots contained the mercury containing preservative, thimerosal. He may have been exposed to forty-one times the level of mercury than is considered safe by Federal guidelines for a child his size. This was on top of other mercury exposure from earlier vaccinations. This issue of having mercury in children's vaccine is a very troubling issue and I intend to continue this discussion in Special Orders every week.

Within ten days of receiving his vaccines, Christian was locked inside the world of autism. Is it related to the MMR vaccine? Is it related to the mercury toxicity? Is it the environment, including food allergies? Or is autism purely genetic?

As with any epidemic, we need to focus significant energy and research on containing it. We need to locate the cause or causes. We need to be aggressive in developing and making available treatments for both the behavioral issues and the biomedical illnesses related to this condition. Last week I chaired two days of hearings to ask experts and public health officials how they have responded to this epidemic.

SHOW ME THE SCIENCE

Some of the scientists and public health officials that have come before the Committee would have us believe that a child's regression into autism within a short time of vaccination is purely a coincidence. However their opinion is not based on scientific evidence, but on their own desire to protect vaccine policy. In fact, our Government has funded very little research looking at the long-term safety of vaccines and has funded no clinical research looking at the potential connection between autism and vaccines.

I don't want to leave the impression that I am an "anti-vaccine" because I am not. Vaccines against serious infectious diseases such as polio and smallpox have saved thousands of lives. I support the use of needed vaccines that have been thoroughly evaluated for safety and efficacy and have been tested extensively.

As Chairman of the Government Reform Committee, I have conducted several hearings on vaccine safety issues and the potential connection between childhood vaccines and the autism epidemic. We have heard from a lot of witnesses on both sides of the issue. One common thread in testimonies of dozens of witnesses is that to date there is a very little research in this area.

Autism and vaccine safety are both very important issues. There is a lot of research that needs to be done to get answers about the causes of autism and whether or not the MMR vaccine and thimerosal-containing vaccines are linked to the onset of acquired autism. Our health agencies can no longer hide their heads in the sand and refuse to acknowledge that we have an epidemic and that in our well-meaning desire to protect the public at large from infectious diseases, that we may have

created this epidemic of a chronic and life-long disease.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 622, HOPE FOR CHILDREN ACT

Ms. PRYCE of Ohio, from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 107-67) on the resolution (H. Res. 141) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 622) to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to expand the adoption credit, and for our purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. NORTON addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. JOHNSON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. JOHNSON addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. SHOWS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. SHOWS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFazio) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DEFazio addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

ENERGY PRICES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. LANGEVIN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, today I am pleased to join my colleagues in addressing the serious issue of rising energy costs.

Today in Rhode Island, the average price of one gallon of regular unleaded gasoline reached \$1.77, almost 5 cents above the national average and a record high in my State.

Thousands of my constituents depend on their automobiles to get to their jobs each day and simply cannot afford the drastic increase in gas prices that they are being forced to pay.

Additionally, this problem has a significant impact on Rhode Island's economy which relies heavily on summer tourism.

Increased gasoline costs threaten to discourage people from summer travel, which would have a disastrous effect on our communities.

Mr. Speaker, we need a solution to this problem now. I have contacted the administration and insisted that any energy strategy that they develop must help American consumers by lowering gas prices.

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Both the President and the Vice President have extensive experience and contact in the oil industry. I am certain that, if properly motivated, they could find a way to lower gasoline prices and bring relief to Americans that have been hardest hit by this price spike.

Our national energy strategy must also incorporate technologies to improve vehicles' fuel efficiency standards in order to reduce our runaway consumption of oil and gasoline.

For example, by requiring SUVs to simply meet fuel efficiency standards of passenger cars would reduce U.S. oil consumption by 1 million barrels per day, approximately the daily estimated oil yield from drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

Even though the technology currently exists to make our Nation's cars and SUVs more fuel efficient, Congress has blocked the establishment of higher standards since 1995.

Mr. Speaker, I intend to work with my colleagues in Congress to increase fuel efficiency standards, not only to cut our consumption of oil and gasoline, but also to reduce emissions of carbon dioxide, the greatest contributor to global warming.

I am optimistic that the United States will take advantage of our current energy debate to develop a forward-thinking plan for the future. We must establish an energy strategy that addresses short-term and long-term problems, is environmentally responsible, and truly benefits the American consumer as well as the future of this world.

ENERGY CRISIS AND FUEL PRICES

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GRAVES). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, in my district in New Jersey, the average price for unleaded gasoline is \$1.72 this month. The Energy Information Administration report shows that the average price in New Jersey was \$1.14 at